



**NEW TESTAMENT TENSIONS AND THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH**, by Carl S. Dudley and Earle Hilgert. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. Pp. 199. \$10.95 (paper).

Recently upon joining the staff of a large mainline church, I participated in a staff planning retreat in which we grappled with a variety of issues in ministry facing our local congregation. I am struck at how the issues with which we struggle as a congregation are distinctly mirrored in Carl Dudley’s and Earle Hilgert’s book. The purpose of the book is to examine significant tensions in the development of the New Testament church and to reflect on the implications of those tensions for contemporary congregations. Dudley and Hilgert examine these tensions through the lenses of a variety of modern social theories. They ask new interpretive questions of the biblical texts and explore several sources of energy that seem evident in the early church but are often lacking in contemporary congregations.

In the “Introduction” Dudley and Hilgert present their methodology and establish their view of the legitimate interaction between the social sciences and theology. Recognizing the limitations of each discipline, the authors argue the need for mutual respect and dialogue between theology and social theory. The five chapters comprising the body of the book analyze the five basic tensions which were sources of energy in the early church: community formation, counterculture commitment, crises of faith, conflict, and ritual.

Chapter 1 of the book deals with “Community Formation”—how the early church created community through distinctively Christian language and vision (*ekklesia*, *ptochoi*, *pistis*, *eirene*, and *mysterion*). Here Dudley and Hilgert draw on the works of George Herbert Mead, James Gustafson, Peter Berger, and Ferdinand Tonnies. The challenge for the contemporary church: “We note the large number of churches today that have borrowed so freely from contemporary culture that they do not have a language that is distinctively their own. What we learned from the sandbox we have sometimes forgotten in programs of church development: distinctive language is essential for building a sense of community” (13). The early church also struggled with the tension between communal intimacy and organizational structure. The authors conclude that the New Testament affirms both intimacy and organization, a tension which remains essential for healthy churches today.

Chapter 2 examines “The Energy of Counterculture Christianity”—how the early church kept from being co-opted by the culture or subverted by its own success. Dudley and Hilgert analyze how the New Testament documents reflect the tension between accommodation and opposition to culture. The early church neither withdrew from (Essenes) nor attacked (Zealots) the surrounding culture. Rather, early Christians moved toward social acceptance in some areas of life while maintaining a counterculture stance in other areas (personal morality, concern for “the poor”). The challenge for the contemporary church is to maintain that tension between social acceptance and counterculture role.

The most helpful section of the book is Chapter 3 where the writers deal with creative

tensions produced by cognitive dissonance in the early church. Crises of faith were created by two realities in the early church: disillusionment resulting from Jesus' crucifixion, and disappointment over the delay of the Parousia. Drawing primarily upon Leon Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance, Dudley and Hilgert interpret the varying responses to the crucifixion and

delayed Parousia among Paul, Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John. The faith crises interpreted theologically by writers in the early church contributed to the development of strong convictions, active commitment, and evangelical zeal in carrying out the Christian witness. The problem for us today is that our churches have little cognitive dissonance:

Overwhelming evidence shows a direct relationship in the New Testament between crisis and evangelism, accompanied by theological interpretation of events. By contrast in our contemporary society most members of mainline churches appear comfortable with the easy relationship between the church and the world as it is. There appears no sharp distinction between the symbolic universe of the nation and the church; there is no crisis of faith which creates a mental or spiritual wilderness of cognitive dissonance required for entry into the contemporary church. (95-96)

Without such cognitive dissonance, evangelism suffers. The contemporary church turns to "friendship evangelism." The basis of church membership becomes social, and the urge to invite others becomes institutional. Have Dudley and Hilgert identified the sources of our confusion and our neglect of evangelism in contemporary mainline churches? I believe they have. Chapter 3 alone is worth the price of the book.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with tensions relating to conflict and ritual. Chapter 4 focuses on the positive functions of social conflict (Lewis Coser) and demonstrates how the early church constructively used both external and internal conflict to create new energy and vision (a prime example being how the early church dealt with ethnic differences between Jews and Gentiles). The challenge for today? "The contemporary church often represses the very conflict that the early church found energizing" (131). "We are not suggesting that the church seek conflict but that it more openly admit the tension that exists between the *eirene* of God and the conditions of the world" (134).

Chapter 5 examines rituals of structure (hymns, creeds, prayers, preaching, offerings, the Lord's Day) and rituals of mystery (Baptism, Eucharist) through which the church maintains order and renews its spiritual life. Issues that have been made evident in conflict (Chapter 4) are incorporated into the church through ritual, thereby serving to sustain and strengthen commitment to God. In developing rituals the early church succeeded in balancing particular, local, and personal expressions with a common, universal faith while at the same time openly rejecting many recognizable religious rituals of the time. The challenge for today's church? "As traditional, even 'creative' contemporary worship often becomes repetitious and boring, the energy of early church worship in widely scattered and richly different situations is notable" (2).

As the authors rightly note, this work is not a sociology of contemporary or early Christianity, nor is it a how-to book or a program for action. It is suggestive rather than

exhaustive. It uses theoretical perspectives as “lenses to view old familiar situations in new light so as to ask fresh questions and hopefully to gain further understandings” (2-3).

Dudley and Hilgert are successful in their effort. The book does ask new interpretive questions of both the New Testament documents and the contemporary church. It challenges us to read the New Testament with new eyes, to reexamine our theology and to rethink our contemporary ministries. One might wish the authors had been more exhaustive in applying their insights to specific issues in the contemporary church. Part of the genius of the book, however, is that the writers leave those applications to the reader.

This book achieves what a good book ought to do. It stimulates us to ask new questions about old texts. It opens the way for us to a new vision of the energy of the early church born of the tensions within early Christianity. This book leaves to us the task of discovering the new energy for ministry which can be born out of the agonizing tensions of our own day. I commend *New Testament Tensions and the Contemporary Church* as a

---

page 78

valuable interpretive tool with the potential to transform our understanding of both the experience of the early church and the theology and practical demands of our own Christian ministry.

Gary W. Klingsporn  
Colonial Church of Edina  
Edina, Minnesota

**MAKING HIGHER EDUCATION CHRISTIAN: THE HISTORY AND MISSION OF EVANGELICAL COLLEGES IN AMERICA**, ed. by Joel A. Carpenter and Kenneth W. Shippo. Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, (Eerdmans), 1987. Pp. 304. \$16.95 (paper).

**THE IDEA OF A CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**, by Arthur F. Holmes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975, revised 1987. Pp. 104. \$6.95 (paper).

**THE REALITY OF CHRISTIAN LEARNING**, ed. by Harold Heie and David L. Wolfe. Grand Rapids: Christian University Press, (Eerdmans), 1987. Pp. 448. \$19.95 (paper).

Several years ago, a speaker at a conference for Lutheran pastors and their spouses was billed as being an authority on evangelicals. His speech was supposed to be an analysis that would help Lutherans understand Protestant evangelicals but, to the surprise of many in the audience, the conference speaker focused solely on television evangelists, yet made sweeping generalizations about “evangelicals” based on inferences about television audiences. In the discussion period following, the speaker strongly resisted the suggestion that there might be a problem in confusing evangelicals with tele-evangelists and their audiences.

Anecdotes like this one make real evangelicals wince. Yet, as several of the contributors to *Making Higher Education Christian* (hereafter, *MHEC*) point out, the media image of evangelicals—even when they are not being confused with tele-evangelists—is often an ironic blend of ignorance and critical condescension.

What is an appropriate corrective? Perhaps there is no better one than reading volumes like the three under review in which evangelicals address and critique each other. These books were written to inform those specifically interested in the history, goals, and future of the institutions for higher education founded and sustained by evangelicals in the last 125 years. They should also be of interest to the broader audience which decries the absence of teaching-for-values in American higher education at large. Additionally, because in articulating their concerns about educating the coming generation they clearly layout the evangelical agenda, these books might fruitfully be read to dispel those general misconceptions about evangelicals now in circulation.

The three books form, in the order listed above, a very complete picture of the historical development of evangelical higher education and of its present concerns. Although it may not have been necessary, as John Van Engen does in *Making Higher Education Christian*, to trace the roots of the evangelical college all the way back to the first medieval universities, nevertheless a “long view” does help remind readers that the modern secular higher education which Americans accept as the norm is an extremely recent (and evangelicals would say “aberrant”) phenomenon. Several essays in this volume are devoted to examining the roots of the evangelical college in the Reformation, the First and Second Great Awakenings, and the nineteenth-century expansion of the American frontier. Others, like the fine essay by Mark Noll, seek to describe how secularism took over the American university and college world. Noll explains that the “dominant frame of reference in American colleges was a realist philosophy from Scotland” which was replaced by German idealism (*MHEC*, 99). Referring to the example of Harvard, Noll comments,

Now [by the mid-nineteenth century], after more than two hundred years of continuous existence, this curriculum [with its year-long capstone course in moral philosophy] and its attendant values vanished almost without a trace. The new university was far too secular, far too

---

page 79

skeptical of Common Sense reasoning and Victorian conventions, to retain the Christian rationalism that had defined the intellectual life of American colleges since their beginning.

If change came swiftly in intellectual life, it came just as swiftly in the conception of higher education itself....While professors in the old colleges had taught students, those in the new universities taught subjects. (*MHEC*, 100-101)

Sweeping as the change was, it was not uniform in American institutions. Noll says that the change was resisted by “some old-style colleges, a few institutions recently founded by Christian immigrants, a large number of newly fashioned Bible schools, a growing network of Catholic colleges, and a sizable number of public institutions in the South and Midwest” (*MHEC*, 103). Yet, since all but a handful of evangelical colleges were founded after the Civil War and most in the twentieth century, their founders were well aware they were trying to plant thin shoots against the strongly blowing secular wind. Thus a strong sense of alienation from the academic world at large has been part of the long heritage of evangelical colleges. Perpetuating

this alienation until very recently was the sense among evangelicals that they had lost “their” universities (like Harvard and Yale early on and Princeton much later), thereby relinquishing both graduate and research opportunities to the opposition.

As the editorial preface in MHEC points out, “Twenty-five years ago, when a group of evangelical leaders dreamed of establishing an evangelical research university, they found that Protestant orthodoxy simply did not have the critical mass of accomplished scholars to sustain such a project” (xiii). That this statement is no longer true is due in large part to the efforts of people like Arthur Holmes, professor of philosophy at Wheaton College (Illinois) for over a quarter century.

From Holmes’ earliest years at Wheaton, his students knew that he had a twofold goal for himself and his colleagues: that they would integrate faith and learning at Wheaton College and that their students would be admitted to the best graduate schools in the nation. Although the following statistics do not speak to the quality of the Ph.D.-granting institutions, they do at least indicate that Wheaton students understood the mandate to go to graduate school. In a listing of the nation’s top 200 private, primarily undergraduate institutions ranked by the number of their graduates who went on to earn Ph.D.’s between 1920 and 1980, Wheaton ranked twelfth; when ranked for the years 1968-1973, Wheaton moved to fifth place (*MHEC*, 15).

As to Holmes’ first objective, his call to integrate faith and learning, it is foundational to the creation of both the Christian College Consortium and the Christian College Coalition, two groups formed in the ’70s to increase dialogue about the integration of faith and learning among the faculty and administration of over seventy-five evangelical colleges. [Lutheran educators are also interested in such dialogue and may be credited with initiating it in the 1950s. The landmark St. Olaf study done then and published as *Christian Faith and the Liberal Arts* (1960) is often favorably cited by the evangelicals contributing to the three volumes under review.]

Holmes’ book, first published in 1975 (revised 1987 in response to subsequent comment), was written because the concern to hear what he had to say had grown beyond Wheaton’s walls—not least because his students were now faculty members at other evangelical colleges. (Although nowhere expressly stated, the majority of the contributors to the other two volumes appear to have been either Holmes’ students or his close colleagues.)

The audience for Holmes’ book, then, includes any who want to hear a well-developed rationale for integrating the Christian faith and undergraduate academic education. It concisely states what is at issue when a Christian college seeks to define its mission. Its brevity also makes it a natural choice to recommend to non-evangelicals who want to get a concise yet adequate image of evangelicals.

The third volume, *The Reality of Christian Learning*, was created by asking a group of evangelical scholars in seven disciplines to respond to the question of how basic Christian concerns and their disciplines interrelate. Most of the papers were delivered at a recent conference at Wheaton College and then reworked for this volume.

In some ways, this volume is a testament to the impact of Holmes’ vision. Here are scholars wrestling with defining, testing, and modeling the integration of faith and learning. As the respondents’ essays show, the task of integration is not an easy one; some, in fact, argue that it is nearly impossible. All would say, contrary to what many non-evangelicals may have been led

to believe, that there is no doctrinaire methodology for achieving the desired integration.

This last book is not meant to be the final word; it will, its authors hope, be superseded by better and similar attempts in the future. Indeed, its best use is as a paradigm to encourage other educators to write their own essays.

Why should one seek to understand evangelicals by listening to what their educators are doing and saying? The answer lies in the simple fact that these educators have had such an impact on the lives of their students, an effect not yet well understood, especially by the media. As Timothy Smith says,

Paradoxically...these liberal arts colleges are almost as estranged from right-wing religious publicists and politicians as religious and political liberals profess to be. They find stridency on conservative political positions a threat to both evangelical culture and democratic ideals. The unpublicized influence of faculty members of these various institutions upon the emerging political attitudes and ideals of their tens of thousands of students is a chief explanation.... (*MHEC*, 5)

Of course there are problems with these books. There is the usual uneven quality of a collection of essays, especially of those in the last volume. There is, as there has always been for evangelical scholars inside typically isolationist evangelical colleges, the danger of parochialism. There is even the danger that, when evangelicals thus bare their souls, those given the opportunity to really understand them will find themselves confirmed in their dislike and distrust.

The questions these volumes raise are many, of course, given the scope of the volumes and the number of contributors and academic disciplines they represent. The questions range from the specific “What political positions are taken by evangelicals and why?”—through broader ones—“Can evangelical ideals be maintained in the coming generation?” to the most vital and general question of all for evangelicals “Should faith permeate life and scholarship and, if so, what characterizes such faith?”

These volumes are highly recommended for anyone interested in the integration of faith and learning.

Sally Harris  
Northwestern College  
Arden Hills, Minnesota

**STORY, TEXT, AND SCRIPTURE: LITERARY INTERESTS IN BIBLICAL NARRATIVE**, by Wesley A. Kort. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988. Pp. xii + 159. \$20.00.

Wesley Kort sets out in this book to develop a “literary doctrine of scripture” (3). He believes that a study of the literary qualities of biblical texts will help to explain how and why those texts function as sacred scripture. But because the pertinent literary qualities are not confined to sacred scripture but rather characteristic to some degree of all literature, the same study will yield “a more scriptural doctrine of literature” (3), that is, a heightened understanding of the religious significance of all literary works. On Kort’s view, then, “the ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ scriptures are not so very different as we may think them to be; the distinction is based

less on the nature of the texts than on the interests of the different communities charged with their keep” (xi). The introduction and the con-

clusion of the book state and elaborate these general themes. In between, the argument is developed in five chapters.

The scripturally significant qualities of the texts are rooted in the nature of narrative, as Kort sees it—and “narrative,” in his usage, is a very comprehensive term. Narrative is “ubiquitous, necessary, and primary” (8), the original mode of human disclosure on which all other literary forms (and, indeed, human language and cognition themselves) depend. Primordial and pervasive as it is, narrative is difficult to define. Rather than offer a definition, Kort identifies four elements: character, plot, tone, and atmosphere. “Narrative draws attention to four kinds of force or meaning in discourse: subjects (characters) involved in processes (plots) under certain limits and conditions (atmosphere) and in relation to a teller (tone)” (17). Because each of these elements corresponds to something deeply mysterious and problematic in human existence, narrative is always impinging upon those concerns we commonly call “religious.”

After developing this account of narrative (which relies heavily upon his earlier *Narrative Elements and Religious Meaning* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975]) in Chapter 1, Kort devotes Chapter 2 to a brief analysis of four biblical texts in each of which a specific narrative element has, he believes, a particularly prominent role in mediating mystery. In Exodus, plot is the main locus of the “appearance of God” through the text. In Judges, it is character; in Jonah, atmosphere; and in Mark, tone. Then, in Chapter 3, Kort coordinates each of four current literary-critical approaches with one of these texts and its dominant element, to show how each approach has its own place in narrative interpretation. “Myth criticism” (e.g., Northrop Frye and Mircea Eliade) is especially illuminating when it comes to plot. Structuralism (e.g., A. J. Greimas) works most profitably on character. “Critical hermeneutics” (e.g., H.-G. Gadamer, Paul Ricoeur) brings out narrative atmosphere. And “composition criticism” (e.g., Meir Sternberg and Robert Alter) deals most competently with the elements of narrative tone.

One important implication which Kort draws from the brief studies in these two chapters is the affirmation of a “critical pluralism” in the study of narrative. Each of the four approaches, left to itself, would tend to distort the texts it studies by making dominant that element of narrative which it is particularly suited to treat, regardless of its actual role in the texts. Employed together, they can serve to correct each other and to bring out the full range of narrative meaning. But beyond this, Kort wishes to assert the priority of the text over method in general. He wants to show that “while the fruits of critical methods can be enjoyed and employed, the complexity and variability of narrative...subvert the implicit claims of literary method to authority, even exclusiveness, and subject the methods to narrative rather than the narrative to method” (51).

In the two remaining chapters, Kort gives some attention to a movement which has not figured much in his earlier discussion: deconstruction. In Chapter 4, “Narrative and Textuality,” Kort makes two main points about the textuality of scripture. (Though Kort never explains just what he means by “textuality,” relying rather heavily on the reader’s prior understanding of this highly involved concept, the notions of repeatability and referability are prominent in his understanding of the term.) One point is that the textuality of scripture relates it inevitably to other texts—not just to other scriptural texts, but to “secular” texts and discourse as well.

Attempts to isolate scripture and its study from other texts and the methods appropriate to them are thus ill-advised. The second point is that it is this textuality-in-common which relates scripture to the world in which we live. “The world to which we refer, the world we have in common, is textual” (110)—a point Kort develops in an appreciative yet firmly critical discussion of Derrida.

Kort’s positive argument continues in Chapter 5, where he confronts the

deconstructionists’ treatments of “writing” and of “canon.” He portrays “scripture” as a category mediating between the fixity and centralizing tendency of “canon” and the marginality and destabilizing tendency of “writing,” as these two terms are used in deconstructionist criticism. Biblical literature, for Kort, models the function of scripture in general—and also of literature in general—by combining these antithetical operations: “It grants and takes away particularity and coherence; it provides and subverts a world; it offers and challenges an identity” (133).

This book is well-written, clear in its intentions and arguments, and rich in insight. Kort’s case studies of four biblical texts are sufficient to indicate the promise of his scheme of the four narrative elements. The “critical pluralism” which he espouses seems wise, although (as he is well aware) it may be difficult to disengage some of the practitioners of the various approaches from their more global aspirations—sometimes for serious theoretical reasons, it should be said.

Kort’s choice and grouping of the critical approaches he studies owes too much to his four-element scheme to be entirely persuasive. That some approaches are more attentive to plot, others to character, and so forth seems clear enough; but that his four categories and their examples adequately represent “the major methods currently employed” (50) and rightly identify their strengths seems less so. But this is a question I must leave to readers better informed in the range of literary-critical approaches.

The discussion of textuality in the last two chapters is, to my mind, the most valuable aspect of the book from a theological standpoint, and I hope that Kort extends it in further writing. One question in particular seems worthy of fuller attention: that of the scope and limits of intertextuality. Kort’s account of the textuality of biblical narratives enables him rightly to stress “their participation in a broader narrative field” (108), which in turn gives them their capacity to represent our world. He emphasizes the reciprocity of this relation: “we cannot isolate biblical narratives from other narratives; we also cannot isolate other narratives from biblical texts” (108). He rejects the “defensiveness” he sees in Hans Frei’s stress on the particular relation between biblical texts and the communities for whom they are scripture, and implies that it amounts to a failure of confidence that the biblical texts can manifest their own truth in the common realm. As I understood Frei’s position, however, it is that the sense which the biblical texts have for Jews or Christians is generated by the way these particular texts interact and function in the life of a community, where they play a privileged role; and that this sense tends to be eroded (or, at least, significantly changed) when other texts are given equal footing in the community’s life—that is, when the community no longer gives the biblical texts the decisive voice in determining what is meant by the concepts and affirmations which govern the



community's life and witness. For Frei, the danger is not that the biblical texts, once understood in this way, cannot hold their own and illumine our common experience, as (to use the phrase of Frank McConnell's which Kort cites [108]) "the story of stories and the Text of texts." It is rather that if there is no boundary between scripture and non-scripture, and thus no limits to the "intertextuality" by which the sense of the community's concepts and affirmations is to be governed, that particular story with its illuminating, world-absorbing power is not likely to be heard or told.

Charles M. Wood  
Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University  
Dallas, Texas

**THEOLOGY AND SOCIETY**, by Gregory Baum. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1987. Pp. 312. \$12.95 (paper).

This book is a highly provocative, pragmatic alternative for the theological student who is skeptical of anything that remotely smacks of Liberation Theology or any form of a new Social Gospel. For good reasons, Baum does not want to be confused with the latter; however, his critical social theory is new, social, and it is gospel. It is also liberating. Encouraged by the action of Vatican II, inspired by the vision of Pope Paul VI and the endorsement of Pope John Paul II, borrowing from the best of Marx and Hegel, and then grounding it in a religious experience of faith and justice tested by Scripture, Baum makes his critical social theory deeply personal, but inherently social. It systematically digs deep to the systemic root of injustice, namely; our unwillingness to be in solidarity with society's victims.

This solidarity seeks to burrow its way up once again into the light of anew day where emancipation is made possible and salvation realized by Christians actively engaged in and committed to putting an end to social injustice and oppression. This challenge should not be a choice, for it is mandated by the gospel of Jesus Christ who is incarnated through his body, the catholic church, in a world that cries out to be delivered from the powers that control and oppress it. "We give glory to the God who will not be tamed, who loves justice, who is no respecter of persons, who makes people long for their freedom, who empowers them to engage in struggle, who is present to them, and through them to history, as liberator of humankind," writes Baum. "Again incarnation and eschatology are reconciled. Transcendence is here the mode of divine immanence. God's presence is explosive, unsettling, empowering, future-creating: it transcends all the prisons that humans have built for themselves and triumphs over all domination and injustice" (140).

While faithful first to the biblical and traditional view that "liberation is first of all liberation from sin and death" (107) and that this liberation is made possible through the crucified and risen Jesus Christ, Baum's model then focuses on Jesus' radical position and identity with the poor and disenfranchised in society. While realistic about the depth of human depravity and sin and the false hope of creating a utopia here on earth, he then proceeds to lift up his goal of universal solidarity. Here his acceptance of Ernst Bloch's definition of utopia ("the kind of criticism of existing societies that provokes the forward looking imagination both to

perceive in the present the disregarded possibilities hidden within it, and to direct itself toward a fresh future”) frees him to pursue his idea of universal solidarity.

Universal solidarity is an ideal towards which partial solidarity, though always in flux, relentlessly drives by working hard to create historical conditions that permit this ideal to be hoped for. Some of the historical conditions I saw lifted up are: (1) first and foremost, preferential option for the poor; (2) the priority of labor over capital; (3) non-violent solidarity to create a more participatory, less dominant society (“solidarity does not aim at the victory of one class over another” [41]); (4) the inherent right of codetermination in labor over capital; and (5) liberation from oppression. The evils to be overcome before this goal of universal solidarity can be realized have also been clearly defined: (1) institutions that oppress and damage people; (2) those capable of persuading others to engage in projects of domination; (3) concentration of capital in ever larger corporations which allow decisions regarding production and resources to slip into the hands of an ever-shrinking elite; (4) capitalism; (5) increasing foreign ownership; and (6) imperialistic supremacy and technology tied to the logic of profit and constant economic expansion without due regard for the rights of workers or the needs of the poor and helpless.

Transformation, not revolution, is the key to Baum’s creation of a just society. Small groups who are linked by their common love for justice-convinced that

---

page 85

the human world can be changed, “empowered by God’s grace to act, and then moving history toward the overcoming of dehumanizing social systems” (289) become a real and viable force making others alert to the structures of sin.

I believe Baum is fair in his appraisal of the present system that is widening the gap in a hierarchy of domination and oppression. Those who are stuck on capitalism and democracy as it now functions will be deeply disturbed by this book. Baum’s wish, however, is not to overthrow, but to create a fairer system. I think that goal is possible given enough dedicated and energetic men and women, at all levels of society, willing to make sacrifices in order to create a more just society. I believe it will take a change of heart, including the hearts of those in the upper echelons of society-and about that I am not optimistic. Power, in wishing to perpetuate itself, is rarely fair or rational, but that is what Baum is asking for. In that regard I view this book as remarkably naive, at least in short term. I do, however, believe we are called to that change of heart. It is worth striving for, and for me, Baum has expressed that calling more clearly than I’ve encountered it before.

Daniel P. Forsberg  
Salem Lutheran Church  
Oklee, Minnesota

---

page 86

**CLINICAL PASTORAL CARE FOR HOSPITALIZED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES**, by John B. Hesch. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1987. Pp. 202. \$9.95 (paper).

Hesch’s publication is designed to extend basic knowledge and experience of clinical pastoral practice into the specialized area of the care of children. His work is a needed and, by

and large, a successful one. For clinical pastors, this book makes a significant contribution to the field of pediatric care.

The book is divided into eight chapters and a brief overview of each chapter will be made. The first chapter introduces the reader to child development, and the author does a competent job on Erikson's work. Of special benefit are the case illustrations following the introduction of Erikson.

Chapter two describes the chaplain's role with patients and their families. Hesch uses helpful clinical examples as he describes the following roles: friend, surrogate parent, liaison, symbolic religious figure, link to institutional church, and ethical consultant.

Hesch's description of the chaplain role as a member of the health care team is solid—he does not overlook the inherent complexities of that role. He has a realistic section on getting acquainted and building trust. He correctly recognizes the role of the nurse in assisting the chaplain's work. This third chapter also deals with staff relationships, including the handling of conflict and ministering to staff.

Chapters four on the pastoral visit and six on prayer as a form of pastoral care were excellent in their sensitivity to the character of the hospital setting and the status of the child and family. The pastoral visit can be, as Hesch makes clear, a powerful source of strength to the child and family. The use of prayer with children and the family was well done in the variety of situations.

The weakest chapter is the fifth, which deals with coping with stress and defense mechanisms. I have seen too much abuse of the information on defense mechanisms by health team members and would just as soon not have the chaplains join in the explanation of this or that behavior as "denial" or "intellectualization," etc. I have a similar reservation about the use of Kübler-Ross's stages which are discussed in the seventh chapter. Here, however, Hesch cautions the reader more frequently.

I was disappointed that the chaplain's role in home/hospice care was not discussed. During more than a decade of work with hospitalized children, I have frequently seen the hospital chaplain assist families in the decision to take their dying child home.

Hesch's closing chapter contains theological reflections that are most helpful. They are a fitting conclusion to a book that can be recommended not only to chaplains but also to pastors and priests who will need to minister to families who have a child who is hospitalized.

Ida Martinson  
School of Nursing  
University of California  
San Francisco, California

**FOR ALL THE SAINTS: CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF MARTYRDOM AND SAINTHOOD IN THE LUTHERAN REFORMATION**, by Robert Kolb. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987. Pp.186. \$29.95.

Robert Kolb, Concordia College (St. Paul, Minnesota) history professor, could pass for Clark Kent, mild-mannered reporter, if you were to meet him on the street. Mild-mannered he is, and a reporter, too. But there the parallels begin to fade. His beat is the sixteenth-century Reformation rather than the news on our daily planet. And already as a reporter, apart from any

textile transformation, he is a rare bird, as is made plain in this superb volume from his regular beat. In this story he reports on a discovery made right in his own backyard, a Reformation

era scoop that he had never noticed in the decade or so he'd already spent covering (better, uncovering) important news in the Reformation sector.

It started with a student's question.

The student had a reference from a martyr-book to a man named Ludwig Rabus, who had...escaped my notice; so I agreed to pursue the matter. To my surprise, I found the first of the Protestant martyrologies by Rabus, a student of Luther and Melancthon and a south German Reformer of some importance in the Late Reformation period (ix)

The subsequent pursuit of Rabus led Kolb to archives and libraries in the US and Strasbourg, Ulm, and Wolfenbüttel, as well as into conversations with an international network of historians also working on sixteenth-century Europe, who cheerfully eavesdropped on his research and commented on his findings. So what did he find?

Ludwig Rabus, born in Memmingen in southern Germany in 1524, was still a teenager when he came to Wittenberg to study under Luther and Melancthon. When he left the university with his M.A., he still was not twenty years old and before long wound up in Strasbourg on the cathedral clergy staff. There he quickly became a popular preacher. In the wake of the defeat suffered by the Lutherans in the Smalcald War, Rabus was removed from his pastorate at the cathedral as the re-catholicizing fingers of the Augsburg Interim moved into Strasbourg. "He reacted by delivering a 'very vehement witness' against the Interim in his final sermon from his pulpit" (44). He was not, however, forced out of town and for the next five years served in a variety of secondary pastoral positions until 1556. In that year he accepted a call from the city council of Ulm to become superintendent of that city's churches. There he continued until his death in 1592 at the age of sixty-eight. Rabus's martyrology, not surprisingly, comes from the time of his enforced semi-retirement in Strasbourg. He entitled it *Accounts of God's Chosen Witnesses, Confessors and Martyrs*. It began with Abel in the book of Genesis and ended after a total of eight volumes with the Confessors at Augsburg and a host of sixteenth-century co-confessors in the Reformation movement. Large sections of the ancient material is lifted unedited from existing sources, and thus Rabus's interpretation is confined largely to the prefaces he wrote for individual units of the whole. From these prefaces one can see the Wittenberg influence of Melancthon's historiography, which he learned while listening to the German Preceptor lecture on Thucydide's works. In addition, "Luther's understanding of God's Word and its role in human history and his theology of the cross reecho through Rabus's prefaces" (53).

Although one of Kolb's sources refers to the "explosive initial success" (81) of Rabus's martyrology, it was reprinted only once, and soon was lost even to historians as Argus-eyed as Kolb himself. Why?

Kolb's own answer to this conundrum is a *Meisterwerk* of historical scholarship, worth at least half of the price of the book. (The chapter on "Saint Martin of Wittenberg" is worth the other half.) Lutherans especially should take note of the reasons for the martyrology's demise.

Not all of them can be seen as Rabus's fault. Some of the causes Kolb pieces together from his polyglot sources worked against Rabus's project willy-nilly. In Kolb's reconstruction, we see why the martyrologies of Rabus's contemporaries, Foxe and Crespin, became unforgettable, and his own forgotten.

Particularly valuable is Kolb's interpretation of two changes that Lutheran martyrology made in medieval commerce with the saints. Lutherans like Rabus reclaimed the centrality of witnessing and confessing in the Christian term *martys*, and relocated saintliness outside the monastery in normal daily life.

On the first item Kolb says: "For Rabus, confessing the faith was more important than dying for the faith" (9). Consequently; "his was, first of all, a book of confessors..." (63). Thus many of his listings are not people who died for the faith but who, in Reformation terms, made a good confession. Thus considerable space is given

to lay confessors in view of the Reformation insight about lay callings to ministry, i.e., confessing the faith, in daily life.

Kolb does not attempt to construct a "theology of confessing" from these early Lutheran roots. But the work of Rabus was surely part of the mix that led to the formulation of a theology of confessing in the Formula of Concord of 1577. These are resources not to be wasted in today's "time for confessing."

On the second item, Kolb tracks the archetypal metamorphosis that the saints undergo from medieval piety to that of Rabus and his successors. The role of the saints in the Middle Ages was twofold. They were, first of all, the wonder-workers invoked by the faithful when a miracle was needed to untangle the frustrations of daily Christian life. Secondly, saints were mediators as the faithful carried on transactions with the divine.

Saintly mediation was clearly knocked out of Reformation piety by the Good News at the heart of Luther's own preaching and teaching, i.e., that the merits and benefits of Christ constitute him the only mediator, that he remains mediator for the daily life of the believer, and that he tolerates no co-mediators assisting him in this role.

The need for wonder-workers superior to us normal Christians was also obliterated by the Word of God's double-edged announcement: on the one hand, that "normal" Christians are themselves the saints that the Scriptures talk about, precisely in their daily callings, and, on the other hand, that the God who welcomes sinners in Jesus is the same Creator who runs the universe. So who needs Superman or Superwoman? Clark Kents and Lois Lanes are saints enough for the reign of God on earth. Thus "the ground once commanded by the medieval saints, half-way between us and God, has been preempted both by God and [by] us" (156).

In his fascinating chapter on "Saint Martin of Wittenberg: Luther in the View of His Students," Kolb applies these rubrics to the veneration of Luther after his death in 1546. Beginning with Melancthon's funeral oration, Luther is on the way to beatification. But it does not proceed in the old way. "The heroic saints of the Lutherans had to be different from the intercessory wonder-workers of medieval piety" (105). That holds true for St. Martin of Wittenberg too. The dominant image of the reformer, despite all the hype, "defined Luther's prophetic persona primarily [Kolb likes alliteration] as one who proclaimed God's Word, who applied the admonition and consolation of law and Gospel to his parishioners" (116).

The disposition to venerate Luther as “super-human” is reflected very early in the tradition....Yet “super-human” is not quite the right word—certainly not “super-human” in the sense of the medieval wonderworkers, for even Mathesius [the highest of the hypers] regarded Luther as no more than the superlative human instrument whom God had selected to accomplish the work of his redeeming gospel. (137)

In the USA Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, “Mary and the Saints” is the current discussion topic. Kolb’s book is “must” reading for both partners. “Generic” Christians too, looking for role models and for help in day-by-day sainthood with gospel grounding, will see why Kolb titles his book *For All the Saints*.

Edward H. Schroeder  
The Crossings Community  
St. Louis, Missouri

**RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE**, by Wayne Proudfoot. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985. Pp. 282. \$30.00/\$8.95 (paper).

This masterful treatment of several central issues in contemporary philosophy of religion both does and does not live up to its title. Proudfoot presents a significant analysis of the role the concept of experience has played in philosophy of religion since Schleiermacher but ends up, for reasons he defends carefully, not specifying what “religious experience” means.

---

page 90

Taking Schleiermacher’s work as foundational for subsequent philosophy of religion, Proudfoot states that Schleiermacher’s program for defending religion against reductionism includes these two theses: “(1) the distinctive moment in the religious consciousness is radically independent of concepts and beliefs,” and “(2) that moment is best described as a sense of the infinite or a consciousness of absolute dependence” (31). Proudfoot argues that these two theses are inconsistent. Having a sense of the infinite cannot be radically independent of concepts and beliefs, for such an experience presupposes having the concept of the infinite. Religious experience does not come prior to or free from the beliefs by which it is interpreted or explained.

Proudfoot explores an ambiguity in what it means to interpret religious experience. He describes two traditions of interpretation: the hermeneutical and the pragmatic. The hermeneutical tradition, growing out of the interpretation of texts, seeks to develop *understanding*, says Proudfoot, in part by working to achieve a creative, empathic identification with the text’s author or cultural context. The pragmatic tradition, based on scientific method, seeks an *explanation* that best accounts for an experience in light of available data.

The distinction between these two interpretative traditions is similar to the topic Proudfoot turns to in his last chapter: description, explanation, and reductionism. He criticizes the blanket rejection of reductionism so common among religion scholars and suggests that there are two forms, descriptive and explanatory reduction. Only descriptive reduction, which is “the failure to identify an emotion, practice, or experience under the description by which the subject

identifies it" (196) is illegitimate. To avoid such illegitimate reductionism the hermeneutical tradition seems to be the best tool for *describing* someone's religious experience, since its goal is to achieve empathic understanding. Explanatory reduction, however, explains an experience in terms that may not be those of the subject. Proudfoot claims that this kind of reductionism is perfectly acceptable; the pragmatic tradition with its emphasis on accounting for an experience in the light of all available data may be the best interpretative method for the *explanatory* task.

Religious experience has been described as "pre-reflective," independent of concepts or beliefs. Using sources as diverse as Aristotle and the social psychologist Stanley Schachter, Proudfoot argues that all emotions include a cognitive component. Having an emotion includes adopting an interpretative framework to explain the physiological arousal. Proudfoot's discussion of mysticism illustrates this point, for to have a mystical experience is to identify a certain experience by the concepts and beliefs that are part of some mystical tradition. Moreover, "religious experience" is not a concept that can be explicated in some universal way. Proudfoot denies that people in different religious traditions have the same experiences; on the contrary, since feelings necessarily include cognitive components, concepts of some particular religious tradition are always part of a religious experience.

I find much to affirm in *Religious Experience*. Proudfoot's most important contribution, I believe, is his persuasive insistence on the cognitive component that is either expressly or implicitly part of emotions in general and of religious experience in particular. Religious experience too often has been characterized by friend and foe alike as non-cognitive and purely emotive.

Proudfoot also makes an important and helpful distinction between descriptive and explanatory reductionism. He rightly calls religion scholars to task for using the charge of reductionism to protect their enterprise from critical analysis. I wonder, though, if the distinction between description and explanation is as sharp as Proudfoot seems to suggest. If I report a religious person's belief that they have had an experience of absolute dependence on God and then explain it

only in terms of some physiological, psychological, or sociological phenomena, have I not failed adequately to account for this experience that the experiencer insists cannot be explained solely in such naturalistic terms? Of course, the person having the experience can be wrong, and therefore explanatory reduction may be appropriate. I think, however, that resistance even to explanatory reductionism may have more of a point than Proudfoot acknowledges.

"The search for a definition that will capture the essence of religious experience is a futile one," says Proudfoot (155). Perhaps so, but one may be forgiven for expecting that a book titled "*Religious Experience*" might have wrestled with that search more extensively. While Proudfoot rightly criticizes any too glib comparison which claims that experience of Krishna, the triune God, and Allah are all the same, does his pendulum not swing too far? While religious experiences are quite particular and tradition-specific, may careful analysis not also reveal some commonalities? If not, we are trapped in a relativism that prevents us from making any legitimate cross-cultural comparison, evaluation, and analysis.

Finally, I sense that Proudfoot is at best ambivalent about the validity of religious experience. He does argue that it should be described in terms that could be accepted by the

person reporting such an experience and thereby indicates that he accepts it as a real phenomenon, at least for such a person. However, his defense of explanatory reduction and his reluctance to define “religious experience” lead me to wonder if he considers it to be a distinct kind of experience and if he thinks its intentional object has any reality beyond the minds of those reporting such experiences.

Roger E. Timm  
Muhlenberg College  
Allentown, Pennsylvania

**MESSIANIC EXEGESIS: CHRISTOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY**, by Donald Juel. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988. Pp. 193. \$19.95.

Though the relationship between Jewish modes of exegesis and the New Testament is recognized by everyone, few scholars actually succeed in illustrating that connection in intimate detail. Into the short and exclusive list of expert exegetes who can uncover the dynamic argument of a New Testament text, we must now put Donald Juel, whose new book *Messianic Exegesis* will certainly serve as a model for how to investigate the problem of the use of the Old Testament in the New in the future.

The thesis of the book is simple. The beginnings of Christian reflection on the meaning of Jesus’ life and career can be traced to the earliest Christian interpretations of Israel’s scriptures. But showing just how these interpretations arose is an extremely intricate and complex problem. Juel’s point is that the events witnessed by the earliest Christian community were interpreted naturally through scripture, just as any other Jewish group would have done. The earliest Christian use of scripture was to understand the “gospel” of Jesus Christ, as it was experienced and received by the Christian community. A new perspective for understanding how the Old Testament texts were appropriated by the early Christian community comes from reading Jewish exegesis of the period and noting how the various Jewish sects appropriated scripture for their own use. The uniqueness of the Christian contribution comes out by comparison and contrast with the other unique uses for scripture in the first few centuries.

Juel argues that the central aspect of Christian reflection was the confession of Jesus as Messiah. This is a simple assertion and seems straightforward enough, but in recent scholarship the role of messianic longing has been made secondary to other issues. This is undoubtedly because we have all become painfully aware

---

page 92

that the Hebrew Bible provides little help in creating a well-defined future messianic helper. Even the pseudepigraphical literature, with the significant exception of *The Psalms of Solomon*, is mostly silent on the issue of messianic longings. In view of the lack of evidence, it is high time for Juel’s complete reunderstanding of the problem.

(See also the important new book *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, ed. Jacob Neusner, Ernest Frerichs, and William S. Green [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987] and the soon to be released publications of the Princeton



Theological Seminary First Jewish Christian Dialogue on the Messiah held in October 1987.)

In putting the confession of Jesus as messiah in the center of his work, Juel is not retreating to the old position; he is showing that the fluidity of Jewish exegesis makes new and anomalous uses of scripture within the Christian community understandable. Thus, the Christian community did not *inherit* a well-formulated concept of the messiah; instead *they formulated* a new one, based on Jesus' life, death, and resurrection understood by means of whatever scripture suggested itself for clarification. The process is everywhere attested in first-century Jewish life. This scholarly approach comes partly from the work of N. A. Dahl, but Juel develops it in new and exciting ways. Close examination of the use that the New Testament makes of Hebrew scripture shows how the feat was accomplished; careful observation of other sectarian exegesis shows that the methods were standard in the first centuries.

Thus, after two introductory chapters exemplifying mid rash and stressing the need for understanding its dynamic before studying New Testament use of scripture, Juel looks at the Christian interpretation of several key Old Testament passages with messianic implications: 2 Samuel 17, the Psalms, the Servant Psalms, Psalm 110, and Daniel 17. Although none of these passages discuss a future messiah, they all need to be addressed to understand the beginning of Christology. There is nothing new in seeing these passages as key for the development of the Christian kerygma. But the way Juel deals with them is certainly new: he eschews the idea that Jesus' life and death fit any pre-existent model. Rather, he gives close attention to the way in which these passages were used in the surrounding environment (showing how extremely difficult it is to get back earlier than the time of Jesus); from that comparison he can then earn a contrast, showing what is novel or unusual in the Christian use of the same scripture. In the same way, he shows that the Christian exegetical enterprise is a post-resurrection phenomenon, casting Jesus' life and mission in terms of the biblical texts he was presumed to fulfill.

Thus Juel argues that the Old Testament verses most important to Christianity had previously attracted no Jewish exegesis of a pre-Christian suffering messiah, no pre-Christian messianic servant who is a redeemed redeemer, and no pre-Christian apocalyptic son of man. Rather each of the major exegetical enterprises seeking to understand the meaning of Jesus' work can best be explained by first assuming a post-resurrection faith in Jesus as messiah, posited on the disciples' notion that Jesus was, on account of his resurrection, ironically and in a new way the very messiah, the title with which he had been crucified. In other words, Jesus' arrest, trial, and execution as messiah were vindicated to the faithful by his resurrection, and the major exegetical enterprises which leave their mark in the New Testament are post-resurrection enterprises.

The fact that Juel's thesis is pragmatic, short, aesthetically pleasing, and his exegesis pointed, will not prevent him from attracting a great deal of criticism. He sets out to poke holes in some of the most cherished theories of pre-Christian role models for Jesus, so he must expect some significant criticism.

A particularly trenchant example is surely Juel's analysis of the suffering servant of Isaiah 53. Many important and

perspicacious scholars, including Barnabas Lindars and Norman Perrin, as well as Joachim Jeremias and Vincent Taylor, have tried to show that the servant psalms in Isaiah 53 were the

controlling scriptures in the Christian kerygma, and even in the consciousness of Jesus. They feel that the title servant was more important than the title *Christ*. But Morna Hooker in her book *Jesus and the Servant* (SPCK, 1959) made a sustained attack on the position. She showed that the passages are hardly popular in pre-Christian Judaism and that the term *pais* is also extremely infrequent in the New Testament. Furthermore, the actual quotations (Matt 8:17, 12:18-21; Acts 8:32-33) do not stress vicarious suffering, which is basic to later Christian understanding of the figure. Although much material from the servant psalms of 2 Isaiah was applied to Jesus, the question is: "For what purpose?" The most satisfactory answer to the question appears to be that they offered the followers of Jesus a way to talk about the rejection and vindication of a servant which they could apply to Jesus' death and resurrection as messiah. In other words, following Hooker, Juel shows that the servant material in the New Testament is based upon the messianic imagery and not the other way around.

But Juel shows that the same pattern of scholarly overemphasis can also be found in evaluating such supposed pre-Christian salvation figures as the son of man. Like *servant, son of man* is never used as a title before the rise of Christianity. The one possible exception here is *The Parables of Enoch*, which are today found in *1 Enoch*, surely a pre-Christian document. But whether the *Parables* were part of the pre-Christian *1 Enoch* is a matter of supposition, since the Qumran edition of *1 Enoch* appears to have contained *The Book of the Giants* instead of *The Parables of Enoch*. As a title, *son of man* is even more problematic than *servant*. Except for Acts 7:56 and John 12:34, it always and only appears on the lips of Jesus. But it is not always what he calls himself; that is, he appears to apply the term to himself and others. Some of the occurrences may be simple self-designations, a replacement for "I." In this area Geza Vermes has shown that the definite phrase '0 'uios tou anthropou must translate a definite Aramaic term *brnš* or *br [']naš*, but no one has been able to explain either phrase as a title. Vermes suggested that it was a grammatical self-designation in Aramaic, a suggestion which has remained controversial (*Post-Biblical Jewish Studies*, Brill, 1975). But there is sufficient doubt about its titular meaning to warrant caution. It is by no means clear that wherever the term is used we should automatically assume some interpretation of Daniel 7 is behind it (see, for example, the cau-

tion of Barnabas Lindars, *Jesus, Son of Man* [SPCK, 1983] 15-16, and Juel, 157). Thus, it appears that some gospel references to "son of man" must be titular, even though the Hebrew expression itself is not, and that other New Testament references need not be. Particularly difficult for the theory of the pre-Christian eschatological *son of man* figure is that the phrase is totally absent from Paul, as is any reference to Daniel. Yet Paul is surely the most accomplished of all the Jewish exegetes in the New Testament.

Because Daniel 7:9 occurs most frequently in conjunction with other references, and preeminently Psalm 110 and Zechariah 12:10, the reference to Daniel is probably a secondary elaboration upon them. It may even be, as Nils Dahl has suggested, that Daniel 7 was brought in to explain the enthronement scene of Psalm 110, which was already seen as kerygmatic. Jesus therefore appears to have used the term in some puzzling way. His followers thereafter made the link with Daniel explicit because it helped to understand his enthronement in heaven and his eschatological role. It makes more sense to assume that, before this development took place, Jesus was already identified as messiah on account of his resurrection. Thus there is no need to

posit a so-far undocumented, eschatological *son of man* figure in Judaism.

Juel argues his case directly, yet articulately and with great elegance. Though the twists and turns of the argument can be very difficult, he never loses the thread and keeps the reader apprised of his ultimate purposes. He does not deal with various other designations of Jesus' role—designations such as *prophet* or *wise man*, which may go back to pre-Easter expectations of the disciples. But his point is to uncover the central dynamic of Christology, not to attempt to discuss the historical Jesus. To his own credit, he does not muddy the waters by attempting to use hypothetical Jewish titles or any supposed answers from life of Jesus research to inform his discussion of these christological interpretations. He has succeeded at keeping the two enterprises as methodologically separate as has any scholar recently. In so doing, he has perhaps pointed out again that both life of Jesus research and the study of Christology may have separate legitimate roles to play, if they can be strictly separated. For his part, I think he has shown most forcefully that Christology developed on a dynamic of Bible exegesis inherited from Judaism, but that it was a specific reaction to a unique set of events—just as was the Bible exegesis of each of the other Jewish sects in the first century.

Alan F. Segal  
Barnard College—Columbia University  
New York, New York

**PREACHING: THE ART AND THE CRAFT**, by Walter J. Burghardt, 5.J. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1987. Pp. 250. \$12.95 (paper).

**QUEST FOR BETTER PREACHING: RESOURCES FOR RENEWAL IN THE PULPIT**, by Edward F. Markquart. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985. Pp. 240. \$10.95 (paper).

Both of these books believe that much preaching today is bad and that the basic reason for this is a lack of imagination. Now, even though Markquart quotes Burghardt (96) and Burghardt refers to Markquart (213) these two books differ greatly when they move beyond their shared interest in imagination.

Basic to Burghardt's program is the development of imagination in preaching through personal passion and sensitivity to the splendor of words (39). Burghardt admits that this program cannot be taught (84) but he proceeds anyway to propose a technique for advancing his program and then to show it at work (90-107). He terms his technique the "problem approach." The key is to "look for a challenge" in a particular set of Bible verses. Burghardt then finds himself "confronted by a human and Christian problem, a perplexing question....[And] it is precise-

ly this problem that racks my preparation, stretches my mind, harasses my heart" (90). All of this ignites the imagination. He then presents twelve examples of this method at work.

Burghardt advances his technique through exploring the preacher as prophet (chapter 3), the claims of feminism (chapter 5), the sermon in the worship setting (chapter 8), matters of anti-Semitism (chapter 10), and humor in preaching (chapter 11). He ends his book with observations

on the 1985 movie “Mass Appeal.” What he likes about this movie is that it “imaginatively and tortuously gets behind the preacher to the person. It lays bare so much that we hide even from ourselves. Sometimes it takes another to scratch our scabs, make the hidden trauma bleed a bit or badly, compel us to see ourselves as we really are the first step on the road to healing” (218). So Burghardt ends where he begins: preaching needs imagination and that comes through challenges to the preacher’s self-awareness.

Markquart, however, does not advance any such technique. He instead commends an agenda. He asks preachers to include SAIs or “contemporary stories, analogies, and images” (143-174) in their sermons. These must be combined with good form and unity of theme. Nevertheless, Markquart’s SAIs are what serve to enhance the level of imagination in sermons.

This idea is developed uniquely in Markquart’s book. He offers what he calls a “compendium on preaching” (16), presenting the best insights from nearly thirty books on preaching. All of this is arranged in some dozen chapters which organize and present the best these books have to offer. Markquart covers the problems with sermons (chapter 2), the character of the preacher (chapter 3), the theological center of preaching (chapter 4), the preacher as student (chapter 5), the place of the prophetic word in preaching (chapter 6), the use of stories in sermons (chapter 7), and then material on vivid expression (chapter 10), speaking skills (chapter 11), and various sermon forms (chapter 12). Markquart ends by proposing a class for churches interested in getting better preaching.

Both of these books help make preaching better. The best part of Burghardt’s book is his “problem approach” technique. I believe that this will make sermons more vital. The best part of Markquart’s book is the collection, arrangement, and interpretation of what the best books on preaching have to offer. His presentation of this varied mass of insights will surely enrich preaching.

I do, however, have two misgivings about these books. The first has to do with the absence of material on how to listen to a sermon. In these days of the near extinction of public address we all need help on how to listen to live, formal, public speech. Burghardt offers a chapter on this but all he actually proposes is that a good listener is open-minded (47). That is just not enough. Markquart does not address this at all. He leaves the impression that better preaching is primarily in the hands of the preacher. He of course insists that preaching will only improve when the preacher gets into vital conversation with the life of the people of the parish (94-97), but nothing more is provided. If there is to be the sort of collegial relation between the preacher and the parish that both these authors want, then some preparation on the part of the listeners is equally in order.

My second misgiving is that both writers deemphasize the offense of the message of Christ. It may be that in the effort to make sermons less boring by being more imaginative it follows that the inherent offensiveness of the message of Christ naturally is reduced. But can that be defended? Both authors know what I am asking. Burghardt says that he does not today see “much point in prophetic exaggeration” (40) since the people “who sit so patiently before us are...faith-full” (39). And Markquart says that “when the fundamental attitude of the preacher is gracious love, then the whole sermon reflects affection, gentleness, and compassion, even when the law is preached” (70). Such pervasive gentleness will not

express well the offense of the message of Christ. In perhaps the most startling part of Markquart's book he reports that "the unanimous consensus of the pastors (in my text-study group) was that they could not criticize the nation from the pulpit without immediate backlash from the congregation. There was no room in the pulpit to say anything negative about national policies" (114). That calls for sermonic outrage! If this is representative, then the church is in another Babylonian Captivity. Such idolatry cannot be handled dispassionately.

Another way this offense is deemphasized is through the belief in the power of SAIs. Markquart says that "reason assaults the fortress walls of the mind, but stories slip gently through the back door into the heart and begin to change us" (152). Is not this finally just too sanguine? This seems to miss the offense, the stumbling block, the folly; and the violent entry declared in Luke 16:16.

Kierkegaard's *Anti-Climacus* wrote in 1850 in *Training in Christianity* (Part II, "The Purport") what is offensive about the message of Christ. It offends by asking too much and by offering too little. The Law demands that we renounce everything when we only want to rearrange priorities. And the gospel only offers divine companionship now and full restoration in the end when what we want is worldly joys and earthly bliss now and forever. This message cannot be lost even in the name of improved preaching. Both Burghardt and Markquart help us in retaining this message, but much more appears needed.

Ronald F. Marshall  
 First Lutheran Church of West Seattle  
 Seattle, Washington

**THE ETHICS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**, by Wolfgang Schrage. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988. Pp. 383. \$29.95.

The study of Christian ethics has been greatly augmented by the publication of this book. Schrage, a New Testament professor at the University of Bonn, has written an insightful study of the ethical aspects of the New Testament documents. The book reflects the finest scholarship and, while leaving no pertinent stone unturned, does not wander from the assigned path.

The key concerns for Schrage, outlined in his introduction, are the guiding principles and motivating forces which created ethical expressions in the New Testament. He does not see the New Testament as a guidebook or collection of moral precepts and universal rules. Therefore, his primary agenda is not "the practical realization of ethical principles," but "the theological motivation and justification of New Testament ethics" (4).

Schrage describes the ethics of the New Testament as contextual and fragmentary. The writers of the New Testament addressed specific concerns shaped by the context of an audience.

In view of their contextual and fragmentary nature Schrage warns against considering the ethics of the New Testament as relative and atomistic. There was a reasoned basis for the diverse constellation of New Testament ethics. The law of love was the governing star, which found its radiance in the words and actions of Jesus Christ.

In the course of eight densely-packed chapters Schrage takes extreme care to present the theological and historical factors that influenced the ethical teachings in the New Testament. The

initial third of the book deals with Jesus' "eschatological ethics." Schrage's thesis is: "the kingdom of God [serves] as the foundation and horizon of Jesus' ethic" (18). Schrage explains that for Jesus the keynote of the kingdom was neither apocalyptic nor sapiential but the message of God's salvation.

Human conduct, therefore, is determined by the salvific emphasis of the

kingdom already present in the life of Jesus. Humanity responds to God's lead of mercy. God anticipates and shapes our conduct. This is spelled out in Jesus' call to discipleship. Disciples are not asked simply to follow Jesus but to participate in the coming of God's kingdom.

Schrage traces the expansion of Jesus' ethics in chapters on the early church and the Synoptics in the New Testament. A crucial factor in the development of ethical reflection was the Law. Beginning with Jesus, Schrage goes on to examine how each New Testament tradition handled the Torah.

Schrage's treatment of Pauline ethics is useful. "The starting point and basis for Paul's ethics is the saving eschatological event of Jesus' death and resurrection" (172). Paul's christology permeated his indicative-imperative sequence. A shift took place, however, in this twofold structure in the Pauline literature. There was a move from the imperative being shaped by the indicative of salvation to the imperative focusing on external dynamics. In the Deutero-Pauline Epistles, the *Haustafeln* (Col 3:18ff.; Eph 5:23ff.) anticipate the need to live within social structures and institutions. Further, in the Pastoral Epistles, the focus of parenetic material is on attacking heresies or supporting ecclesiastical tradition. The ultimate result is catechesis replaces parenesis; eschatology is subverted by moralism.

Significant also is the treatment of Hellenistic and Jewish elements in the above mentioned epistles. Where Paul is careful to reshape contemporary ethics, the tendency in his disciples' ethics is to accommodate Hellenistic ideals.

Although they are not discussed in this review, Schrage devotes separate chapters to James, Hebrews, and Revelation.

The author notes an initial difficulty when talking about the Johannine school and their ethics. When compared to the rest of the New Testament one discovers "an almost total absence of specific injunctions or detailed parenetic passages" (247). Nevertheless the presence of an ethical basis does exist in the Johannine writings. The commandment of love is dominant in John, but it has been qualified by brotherly love. In John "the radical inclusiveness of 'neighbor' found in Jesus has vanished" (316). The object of *agape* is not neighbor or enemy but other Christians.

Schrage's work is meritorious. His sources, both ancient and modern, are extensive. Throughout, the reader is presented with a careful analysis of the theological motivation for Christian ethics. The structure of the book is orderly and comprehensive. Each chapter begins with a full bibliography and each chapter follows an informal outline. Notes were conveniently placed at the bottom of the page where cited. Unfortunately, there is no index.

Where Schrage excelled in research and analysis he fell short in summaries. He did not allow the reader a final panorama of the vast landscapes through which he traversed. A few concluding paragraphs thoughtfully placed would have helped to complete major portions.

Although Schrage's primary subject was the underlying criteria of the ethics of the New

Testament his consideration of concrete principles was especially helpful. He dealt extensively with such matters as gender roles, marriage/ divorce, the individual and the State. The accents of each writer were presented individually and compared and contrasted with others.

There is ample material here for further reflection. It is easy to have an opinion on Christian conduct and marshal forth proof texts to match. What is more difficult and much more important is to understand the criteria on which to establish ethical reasonings. To this end Schrage has brought to bear a vast store of insights that will enlighten future ethical discourse.

Joel M. Quie  
Stewart Avenue Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

---

page 99

**PROTESTANTISM—ITS MODERN MEANING**, by David A. Rausch and Carl Hermann Voss. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. Pp. 221. \$12.95 (paper).

I looked forward to reading this book. There is, I think, a strong demand in theological education at the present time for a solid, brief, up-to-date account of Protestantism in its historical development. The need for such a book is not only educational, but apologetic. The notion of Protestantism has fallen on hard times, especially among some circles of educated and influential Lutherans. In these circles the word, “Protestant” is often accompanied by the modifier, “mainline”—a general insult meant to convey the judgment that the Protestant cause is culturally captive to a variety of secular forces. Some Lutherans want to disavow the very idea of Protestantism so much that they are willing to place the Lutheran Church under the legal jurisdiction of the Roman pontiff (see the ecumenical document, *Facing Unity*). Even the Reformation has been reconceived by what Steven Ozment calls the “romantic ecumenists” as a “correction” in the continuity of Catholic history rather than what it actually was historically: a revolutionary upheaval in the thought and practice of the western church.

I have no doubt that there is something called “mainline Protestantism.” It is an illness that has infected Lutherans and Episcopalians and a host of other denominations unsure of their identity, afraid of being marginalized in society; captive to an ecclesiastical “new class,” and suffering the severe symptom of declining numbers. But anyone aware of the “Protestant principle”—namely, the insight that the gospel cannot be contained in or guaranteed by any institutional arrangement of Christians—should not be shocked or surprised by this state of affairs. The fact is that Protestant churches have not lived up to the heritage of their own theology. Rome was not the answer in the sixteenth century and it is not the answer now.

Unfortunately, the problem with this new volume is that it is short on theological substance—the very thing that should be the center of its argument. Luther and Calvin are given brief, perfunctory paragraphs describing their ideas as are Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, and Barth. Without a solid account of theological ideas at its core, the book reads like a superficial survey. Even basic historical information is, at times, a problem. For example, the authors assert that fifty thousand Anabaptists had been put to death by 1535 (32). Where does this number come from? The Anabaptist population is a matter of complex debate among scholars (e.g., the work of Claus-Peter Clasen).

Some chapters are quite good. The account of fundamentalism, for example, draws on the

specific expertise of Rausch himself. But this does not make up for theological deficiency. Perhaps it was thought that there were enough traditional accounts of the subject matter. But it is a mistake to assume theological literacy on the part of religious students. In any event, the book remains a torso.

The best volume of this kind remains the classic written a generation ago: *Protestant Christianity* by Dillenberger and Welch. My hope is that these fine authors will consider updating their material. The theological community would be in their debt.

Walter Sundberg  
Luther Northwestern Seminary  
St. Paul, Minnesota

**THE NARRATIVE COVENANT: TRANSFORMATION OF GENRE IN THE GROWTH OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE**, by David Damrosch. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987. Pp. 352. \$21.95.

The topic Damrosch addresses in this book is one of the central, although most problematic, issues in contemporary biblical studies: the relationship between historical criticism and literary criticism. The stated purpose of his study is “to explore the origins and growth of biblical narrative” (1). In order to conduct such an exploration he argues “that a close conjunction of literary and historical criticism is needed” (298).

In terms of scholarly procedure, Damrosch attempts to demonstrate (1) “that biblical narrative does have close and meaningful links to Mesopotamian literature” which “show both the origins of biblical narrative and its particularity”; (2) “that source study...is essential to understanding the dynamics of literary transformation that produced the canonical form of the text”; and (3) “that a better understanding of the origins and growth of biblical narrative gives us important assistance in reading the text in its canonical form” (p. 2).

In this comprehensive study Damrosch traces the development of Hebrew narrative in terms of two major advances. The first advance was the “full translation of older epic into historicized prose” (3). He develops this argument through a comparative analysis of the Babylonian creation-flood epic and Genesis 2-11. The second advance was the “application of poetic epic perspectives to historiography proper” (3). This argument he develops through a source analysis of the various Davidic traditions which comprise 1 and 2 Samuel.

Damrosch then analyzes the relationship between the pentateuchal and deuteronomistic traditions. In so doing he departs from traditional biblical scholarship and argues for a mutual influence between these two great narrative traditions. He suggests that the “literary patterning” of the narratives reveals that “the early Yahwistic pentateuchal material influenced the shaping of the David story, and the David story in turn influenced the Priestly reworking of the Pentateuch” (4).

Having traced the growth and development of the Yahwistic and deuteronomistic traditions, Damrosch proceeds to an extensive discussion of the Priestly Writers who brought the Pentateuch to its canonical form through “the interweaving of historical narrative and law.” He suggests that this development constitutes “a second great literary revolution” of this new “epic historiography” (4). In arguing this development, he focuses on the often neglected book of



Leviticus in which “law and history meet on a common ground composed of ritual, symbolic, and prophetic elements” (263).

As even this all too brief summary of the book indicates, Damrosch has undertaken an ambitious, if not ambiguous, project. He is, however, well aware of the difficulties. Nonetheless, he boldly asserts that “it is important to face up to the difficulties that have stood in the way of rapprochement between historical and literary study even when parties have sincerely wished it” (7). Furthermore, he is modest in assessing his results and stresses that his “aim is to be suggestive rather than exhaustive; there is much here that is tentative” (7). Yet he believes “that it is high time to begin the work of integrating the fields of comparative, text-historical, and literary study” (7).

In spite of such claims, Damrosch is still an historical critic in method and sympathy. Methodologically he approaches biblical narrative from the perspective of extra-textual parallels and intra-textual sources. He offers general thematic readings instead of “close literary readings”; and the goal of his analysis is to seek the intention of the authors or redactors.

As such, he is critical of such literary critics as Robert Alter and Meir Sternberg whom he regards as “fighting a holding action against what [they] see as the corrosive effects of historical criticism” (299). Hence he is critical of Alter’s literary approach which regards the biblical narra-

---

page 101

tive as the product of “composite artistry.” He argues that this approach not only ignores the sources which comprise the final form of the narrative, but that with it Alter also generates an interpretation which is “as much his own creation as that of the Deuteronomic historian who created the canonical text, running as it does against that final author’s intentions as often as it follows them” (307).

In defending historical criticism against the literary critics’ often polemical charge of atomism, Damrosch observes that “hard-core atomizers are few and far between these days” (299), and he counsels that “such material simply is to be disregarded” (300). He further notes that in the past two decades historical criticism has shown an interest in “the rehabilitation of the later stages of the biblical text and an increasing interest in relating source study to the context and overall text” (300) and that “historical criticism frequently yields subtle literary insights as well” (301). Given what seems to be his own preference for historical criticism, this statement ironically characterizes Damrosch’s own work in this book.

In spite of his defense of historical criticism, Damrosch’s own historical conclusions often run counter to those of the prevailing consensus. This fact coupled with his strong critique of literary criticism as practiced by Alter and other literary scholars will insure lively discussion and debate, if not controversy.

Although his often brilliant study con-

---

page 102

tains many useful insights, I question whether he has managed a successful synthesis between historical and literary critical approaches. In fact, the open questions still are: Is such a synthesis possible? Are historical criticism and literary criticism two equally valid, complementary

approaches? Or are they simply contradictory in both purpose and method? I suspect that these are questions with which scholars will struggle for some time to come. Damrosch's book offers an excellent stimulus and starting point for future projects on these issues.

Richard G. Bowman  
Augustana College  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota

**THE PARABLES OF JESUS**, by Herman Hendrickx. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986. Pp. 291. \$14.95 (paper).

**MANY THINGS IN PARABLES: EXTRAVAGANT STORIES OF NEW COMMUNITY**, by Frederick Houk Borsch. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988. Pp. 167. \$12.95 (paper).

The parables of Jesus continue to attract scholarly attention, as well they should, and the literature on them continues to abound. At the back of the book by Hendrickx, for example, there is a bibliography of over six hundred titles which is limited with few exceptions to the 1960s to the present. The question which arises is whether two more books add anything substantial to our resources.

Hendrickx, a native of Belgium but a professor of New Testament studies at Maryhill School of Theology in the Philippines, provides expositions of fourteen parables. These include the seed growing secretly, the mustard seed, the leaven, the weeds among the wheat, the good Samaritan, the rich fool, the wedding feast, the three parables of Luke 15, the unjust steward, the rich man and Lazarus, the unjust judge, and the Pharisee and the tax collector. By and large the author's treatments are very close to the texts, and he draws extensively from recent scholarship to illumine details. Then at the end of the analysis of a given parable there is a section called "Reflection" in which Hendrickx makes suggestions for a "communitarian application" of the parable being discussed-with the aim of going beyond individualistic interpretations-and each of these consists of remarks of his own and quotations from other sources.

The author prescribes a method of interpretation at the outset. He recognizes the cultural distance between the first century and the present, but he contends that it is elitist to think that interpretation can proceed only after the gathering of historical information. Instead, he says:

The gospel is intended in the first place for the poor who do not have access to higher education. There must, therefore, be another way which corresponds better to the spirit which prompted Jesus to have recourse to the more direct parabolic language: a method which starts from the actual circumstances of the life of contemporary people. (5)

The statement begs questions ("Which 'contemporary people' are you talking about?," and so on), but an even greater problem is that it has no bearing on the author's actual working method. Each chapter starts immediately with literary and exegetical comments, and soon one is into historical detail as well. It is only at the end (the "Reflection" sections) that one finds a connectedness to "the actual circumstances" of life.

But the book should not be written off on the basis of this methodological inconsistency. There is a wealth of material here, including a lot of summing up of the views of major scholars who have dealt with the parables and the teaching of Jesus. And the “Reflection” sections are of considerable interest. Here we observe an ex-continental European, classically educated theologian seeking to interpret the parables in a poor and largely Asian culture. What he says is also of value to the interpreter in North America.

Borsch, who has been Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Religion at Princeton University; but is now a bishop of

the Episcopal Church in California, has written a very refreshing and helpful book. He provides expositions of eighteen parables: the unjust steward, the Pharisee and the tax collector, the laborers in the vineyard, the prodigal son, the great banquet, the lost sheep, the good Samaritan, the weeds among the wheat, the wedding garment, the ten maidens, the unmerciful servant, the hidden treasure, the talents, the friend at midnight, the unjust judge, the seed growing secretly, the mustard seed, and the sower. Each treatment is obviously based on a high level of exegetical scholarship behind the scenes, but what is printed on the page is an engaging discussion that raises issues of meaning in both the ancient and modern worlds-and deals with them with theological and pastoral sensitivities.

The author’s approach is to combine literary and historical approaches, and he recognizes both the limits and the possibilities of combining them, making a statement that relieves the anxiety of the interpreter who has picked up somewhere the idea that there is only one “correct” interpretation of a parable:

The result will not necessarily be some one best interpretation, but certain understandings may be largely ruled out. What may emerge is a kind of direction, and paths in that direction, along which interpretation can most usefully proceed. Those paths, however, need not be narrow. The width of the possibilities that are opened up can allow audiences to explore along the ways and to see details and aspects of the landscape that will enrich their appreciation and understanding. (8)

An appealing feature of Borsch’s work is that he does not simply provide an exegetical basis for interpretation, which many a book in the field pretends to do (“Here is the exegesis; after giving me the thanks due, the preacher can now properly proceed to interpretation and proclamation”), nor does he merely hint at what might be done in interpretation today; he actually *does* it. At times one gets the impression that we have material from actual sermons before us. That is not so to the degree of H. Thielicke’s *The Waiting Father* (ET, 1959), which contains actual sermons, but the comparison can hardly be avoided from time to time.

The work on individual parables is consistently excellent and stimulating. The introductory essay on parable interpretation is instructive. And in the closing essay the author makes an illuminating connection between the proclamation of Jesus (in parables) and the proclamation about Jesus (his death and resurrection) in the early church. Essentially his point is that the disciples, given new hope through the good news of the resurrection, recall the parables of Jesus as stories which oriented them toward the hope they now have, and they find Jesus

standing both behind and in the stories (as, for example, in the Samaritan's care for the stranger, Jesus is both behind the story as its teller, but he can also be recognized in it as the one who cares).

In answer to our question posed at the outset, yes, these books add to our resources for parable interpretation. But they are quite different from one another. The work of Hendrickx informs and suggests. The work of Borsch informs and engages. The preacher looking for sound exegesis of the parables in the service of proclamation will find the work by Borsch to be one of the best, if not the very best, available in the field.

Arland J. Hultgren  
Luther Northwestern Seminary  
St. Paul, Minnesota

**DEADLY SINS AND SAVING VIRTUES**, by Donald Capps. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. Pp.162. \$10.92 (paper).

A friend saw the title of this book and commented that surely the sins were more interesting than the virtues. It is the sins that often catch our eyes, yet my interest was most piqued when Capps wrote of the virtues and their relationship to the Beatitudes. The premise of the book is that there is an order to one's life; that there are predictable stages where most of us meet crises which afford us opportunities to choose how we will live with ourselves, with others, and with God. Capps draws heavily on the life cycle

---

page 104

theory of Erik Erikson which says we move through a series of stages in life—infancy, early childhood, play age, school age, adolescence, young adulthood, adulthood, and mature adulthood. Each stage of life presents its own “crisis” where we have the opportunity to choose and develop a “disposition” to life. Capps seeks to link each stage with one of the deadly sins of the traditional list. These are: pride, envy, anger, sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust. Capps proposes to call sloth *apathy* and to restore melancholy to the list. Thus there are eight stages of life and eight deadly sins. A nice fit!

The purpose of the book is not to dwell on the sins but to posit a relationship between the dynamics of a particular stage and the sinful dispositions which are present, the idea being that one has to know the enemy to meet the enemy. Capps proposes to meet the deadly sins with eight corresponding saving virtues. These are: hope, will (courage), purpose (dedication), competence (discipline), fidelity, love, care, and wisdom. His thesis is that even though it is inevitable that in each stage we will meet these sinful dispositions because they are part of who we are, it is possible to draw on resources within our tradition to combat these deadly sins. Just as we say that “we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves,” so also we believe that we are “made in the image of God.” Virtues are inherent in us and we can exercise them as we meet the crises of life. Capps uses the stories of Esau, Moses, Balaam, Saul, Jonah, Samson, The Preacher, and Job to describe the tension between the deadly sins and the saving virtues and the possibility for choosing which brings life. Key to his argument is the idea that there is always a tension between

the sins and the virtues and that the whole scheme is flexible. A person may experience a particular crisis at any point in his or her life.

The jewel of the book for me was chapter nine. Here Capps asks the question of how we are to marshal the saving virtues in our struggle against the deadly sins. For Capps, it is our tradition itself which has the power to help us in our daily attempt to follow Christ. The biblical world view, exemplified in the Beatitudes, is a stronghold and encouragement for life-giving dispositions, and these much more so than moral prohibitions. It does seem a bit contrived, but he links the eight Beatitudes with Erikson's eight stages of life (and the eight deadly sins). My initial skepticism was overcome by a strong congruence between the two. What accounts for this striking parallel?

...the two systems reflect a very similar outlook on the world. Jesus' Beatitudes were addressed to those who constantly met with life's persecutions, humiliations and defeats. Similarly Erikson's life-cycle theory is not an achievement scale that tracks the steady upward process of the successful and respected. Rather it is for those who have lived intimately with mistrust, shame, doubt, guilt, inferiority, confusion, isolation, stagnation and despair....For such persons, both the Beatitudes and the life-cycle theory give a message of encouragement. (134)

Capps ends the book with a brief look at the pilgrimage motif and an attempted linkage of the first eight books of the Bible and the eight stages of the life-cycle. He himself admits it might seem contrived. The final pages are an attempt to draw parallels between narrative literature and the life-cycle. He uses John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* to bolster his book's central theme, that life is a process or pilgrimage where we will encounter specific crises of faith that can be met with the resources of our faith tradition.

Capps has provided a good resource for pastors that can help us in our dealings with ourselves and with our people. Throughout the book he admits where the parallels might seem contrived, yet this reviewer finds the book as a whole to be right on the money. The stages of Erikson's life-cycle, the list of deadly sins and saving virtues, are helps for us to be "more receptive to the living word of God and more open to hitherto unimaginable possibilities and crises" (151).

Jeffrey Loudon  
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
Glenwood Springs, Colorado